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Chairman: Mr. MONGBE (Benin)

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AGENDA ITEM 96: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 96: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (A/48/182, A/48/338, A/48/359, A/48/430 and Add.1, A/48/484-S/26552, A/48/492, A/C.2/48/3, A/C.2/48/4)

1. Mrs. SADIK (Secretary-General, International Conference on Population and Development) drawing attention to the progress report on the preparations for the Conference and to the annotated outline of the final document of the Conference (A/48/430 and Add.1, respectively), said that the latter did not represent a full draft of the final document, but merely delineated the immense range of issues the Conference was mandated to address. Any attempt to renegotiate agreements and understandings reached at recent international conferences would be counterproductive. As the preparations continued, the centrality of population issues must be kept firmly in mind.

2. She invited the Committee's comments on the content and the structure of the annotated outline, noting that, while preliminary reaction thus far had been positive, there was a certain amount of repetition in some areas and the format adopted might not provide the needed flexibility within which to reflect clear, action-oriented proposals and commitments. Each chapter and section contained a sub-section on selected topics for recommendations, but it might be preferable to focus on activities.

3. At the second session of the Preparatory Committee, she had set out preliminary views on the incorporation into the outcome of the Cairo Conference of a series of 20-year goals, relating to reduction of mortality levels for infants, children and mothers, universal access to family-planning information and services, and universal access to and completion of primary education by all school-age children, including specific gender goals, with a possible extension to secondary levels. Strong support must develop around such goals if they were to be implemented.

4. In chapters XIV and XV the focus had been placed on resources. In some areas, such as those most directly concerned with family planning and population data, it would be not only possible but also important to spell out the expected costs. Finally, the real measure of the Conference's success would be the extent to which its proposals and recommendations were viewed, at both the national and international levels, as relevant, practical and even critical to sustainable development.

5. Activities at the national level were another important aspect of the preparatory process. The real impact of the Conference would lie in the revitalized sense of cooperation, commitment and interaction at the national level when issues of population and development were addressed. There were encouraging reports of substantial interaction within the governmental sector and the involvement of non-governmental organizations, academics, parliamentarians and others in the preparations for the Conference. With the assistance of extrabudgetary contributions, the Conference secretariat had been able to assist developing countries in undertaking such national activities as the preparation of the national population report. Fifty such national reports had been received thus far, and their analysis was already under way so that an

(Mrs. Sadik)

overview of national experiences could be available for the third session of the Preparatory Committee and for the Conference itself.

6. The adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/76 had confirmed the growing importance being attached to the Conference and the need for an adequate preparatory process. That resolution had strongly emphasized that the first draft of the final substantive document must be in the hands of delegations well before the third session of the Preparatory Committee, and the secretariat intended to comply fully with that directive. An important feature of the preparatory process had been the involvement of non-governmental organizations. Thus far, some 600 non-governmental organizations had been accredited or had applied for accreditation, and that number would be likely to increase in the coming months.

7. She expressed her appreciation to all the countries and organizations that had pledged and contributed to the financing of the preparatory process. Those resources had inter alia helped support the national activities she had mentioned earlier and had made it possible to fund participation by delegates from the least developed countries. Further contributions of any amount would be greatly welcomed.

8. Mr. CLAVIJO (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the developing world had demonstrated its commitment to the International Conference on Population and Development by participating actively in the preparations. The members of the Group of 77 were studying the annotated outline, and several delegations would have comments to offer. They considered it essential for the Secretariat to pay careful attention to the views of the developing world. A full understanding of the changing economic, cultural and political conditions of the developing world was essential for effective support of the efforts of individual countries to incorporate population components into their development strategies.

9. The Group of 77 attached great importance to Part Three of the annotated outline concerning means of implementation. The action programme to be adopted should reflect the effective commitment of the international community to confront the urgent challenges posed by demographic factors in the developing world. Obviously, the volume of resources allocated and their effective use would be crucial to the decisions to be adopted in Cairo.

10. Mr. VAN DE CRANE (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, said that they had received the questionnaire and annex to be used in the preparation of national reports, and would be submitting their reports shortly if they had not already done so. They felt that the reports should make a substantial contribution to the work of the Conference, however the annex to the questionnaire seemed to reflect too greatly the point of view of developing countries.

11. With regard to the discussions to take place before the third session of the Preparatory Committee, they felt that the national reports, the current debate within the Second Committee and brief consultations, if needed, should be sufficient to finalize the document at the third session. The brief

(Mr. van de Craen, Belgium)

consultations should not last more than a few days and could take place in January 1994.

12. While the contents of Part Two of the outline were broadly acceptable, a balance should be struck between global matters, such as the link between population, environment and development, and individual reproductive rights and responsibilities. The document should be simplified and more action-oriented, with greater focus on an integrated approach to population issues, and the number of recommendations should be restricted and grouped by chapter rather than section. The objectives should be realistic and implementation of the objectives should be linked to the implementation of the conclusions of the other large forthcoming conferences on humanitarian matters.

13. Particular attention should be devoted inter alia to the relationship between population, environment and development; the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; sexual and reproductive health, including health responsibilities between partners and abortion; women's health, independently from family and infant health; free choice regarding the number of children as a basic human right; the needs of the adolescent population; and migration policy, including the economic constraints of the host country and the impact on the countries of origin.

14. Population policies should be neither discriminatory nor coercive. There should be increased administrative capacity to deal with population matters, and family-planning services should be extended and improved. National resources and international aid devoted to population should therefore be increased, however, the discussions should be focused on achieving the objectives rather than on funding. It should be possible to carry out the objectives which would be agreed upon at the Conference within the framework of the existing structures of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Population Commission.

15. Mr. MAHRAN (Egypt) expressed the hope that greater emphasis would be placed on the relationship of development to population issues; it might be dealt with as a separate theme in the document. Chapter III should place greater emphasis on the impact of consumption patterns, and reasonable consumption patterns must be defined for both developed and developing nations and supported by appropriate technology. It would also be useful for the outline to cover the effect of structural adjustment programmes on population and development. A linkage should be established between rural development and sustained economic growth. By the year 2000 Cairo would be one of 10 megacities. Such urbanization was detrimental to sustainable development. The promotion and financing of rural development should help to alleviate the problem.

16. The topic of male responsibilities and participation in population programmes (para. 17 of the outline) should be more fully elaborated, perhaps in a separate chapter, for women had borne too much of the burden for too long.

17. Chapters V and VI; chapters VII and VIII; chapters IX and X; and chapters XI and XII should be combined. Greater emphasis should be placed on efforts to close the gender gap; safe motherhood education programmes, programmes to improve the status of women in society and effective programmes to reduce illiteracy rates among women; the link between ethics and population

(Mr. Mahran, Egypt)

programmes; effective programmes for the elderly and school programmes in population and environmental protection studies; information exchange in the area of migration; support for the transfer of technology for the local production of contraceptives; special campaigns for men to raise their awareness of gender issues, their role in the family and their responsibilities for women's health; adequate financial resources for the implementation process; understanding the sovereign rights of each State and on policies and programmes tailored to local conditions. Moreover NGOs should be given the freedom to exercise their creativity in a non-partisan environment without undue bureaucratic constraints.

18. A number of special committees had been established in connection with the preparations for the Conference, as well as a citizens' advisory group to present a wider view of population and development. Special commemorative coins and stamps were being issued, and short films and books on population and development would be produced in both Arabic and English. The Conference would take place at the Cairo International Conference Centre, equipped with modern technology and facilities for interpretation services in eight languages. The host country agreement would be signed shortly. A parallel NGO forum would take place across the street from the main conference hall.

19. Mr. NEBENZIA (Russian Federation) said that the annotated outline of the final document provided a sound basis for the document itself, which should be discussed and agreed at the third session of the Preparatory Committee. That document should take into account the interests of all countries and ensure that their specific needs were adequately reflected. The Russian Federation was currently suffering from a natural decline in its population, which was the result of an unfavourable combination of fertility and mortality rates as well as emigration. The geographic distribution of labour resources and the age structure of the population were also creating difficulties. The market reforms currently under way were having a mixed impact on population issues. The conflicts on Russia's borders had given rise to a growing flow of refugees, and emigration and the brain drain were increasing. Such problems in the Russian Federation and other countries with economies in transition should be adequately reflected in the recommendations of the Conference, and should be addressed in the draft final document.

20. He supported the proposal of the Secretary-General of the Conference to include in the final document a number of indicators on key population parameters; such indicators should be realistic and obtainable and capable of inclusion in regional and national programmes and strategies. He commended the efforts of the Secretariat to inform the public about the preparations for and the basic objectives of the Conference. Finally, he supported Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/76 which recommended that the Preparatory Committee should become a subsidiary body of the General Assembly.

21. Mr. GONZALEZ (Chile), speaking on behalf of the member States of the Rio Group - Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador (on behalf of Central America), Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela and Chile - said that the structure of the annotated outline and the topics selected for inclusion in the final document were extremely appropriate. In view of the short time that remained before the convening of the Conference the discussion

(Mr. Gonzalez, Chile)

should focus on substantive issues. In that connection, the Rio Group welcomed the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/76, extending the third session of the Preparatory Committee to three weeks. It was also pleased that, under that resolution, the Preparatory Committee would become a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. It wished to congratulate the host country, Egypt, on the bold initiatives it had taken during the preparatory phase and express its full support for those initiatives.

22. The Rio Group attached great importance to the Conference as a vehicle for people-centred international activity, which should take into account the interrelationship between demographic factors and social and economic concerns in human development. He wished to reiterate the recommendations contained in the Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on Population and Development.

23. The Rio Group attached particular importance to international migration (chapter X). Efforts to control migration should seek to ensure that migratory flows were beneficial to both the country of origin and the country of destination, but, above all, to the people concerned. Migration policy must also take into account the causes for such movements. In past decades, rash, restrictive policies had proved to be inefficient, creating problems for both Governments and migrants. It was to be hoped that the importance of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families would be reflected in the document submitted by the secretariat to the third session of the Preparatory Committee. The design of appropriate institutional mechanisms and a clear definition of sources of financing would be crucial to the success of a new action programme.

24. Mr. ABDELLAH (Tunisia), speaking on behalf of the Maghreb States, said that they would be facing demographic problems for at least the coming two or three decades, and would need to implement clear population policies in association with other measures in order to ensure sustainable development. Greater attention needed to be devoted to population issues in each country and at the level of the Arab Maghreb Union. Lower mortality rates required greater control of birth rates.

25. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union supported the Conference and hoped that it would shed new light on population issues and their relation to the environment and cultural and social factors. A Maghreb Seminar on Population and Development had been held in Tunis in July 1993 at which a Unified Maghreb Plan of Action had been adopted. It contained recommendations in the following areas: population, social welfare, education, health, employment and housing; migration, in particular from the Maghreb countries to Europe; enhancement of the role of women and development; women's health and infant mortality.

26. Sustainable economic growth required control and reduction of population growth. The funding countries and institutions were therefore called upon to bolster their cooperation with the Maghreb countries on population policies. The Maghreb countries wished to propose that debt service should be used to promote population policies and programmes.

27. Regarding the contents of the annotated outline (A/430/Add.1), Part Three should be developed further and more closely linked to the proposals contained

(Mr. Abdellah, Tunisia)

in Part Two. He proposed that the format of Agenda 21 should be followed and requested the secretariat to propose programmes of activity under each chapter of Part Two. The chapters on financial resources and transfer of technology should be revised. With respect to chapter X on international migration, the Maghreb countries stressed the need to preserve the human rights and dignity of immigrants in the advanced countries and to devote more attention to persons who were forced to seek refuge in neighbouring countries such as the victims of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who were in need of urgent international assistance. Greater attention should be devoted to the problems of women and girls in rural areas and working women in the city and some thought should be given to follow-up on the results of the Conference.

28. Mrs. FREUDENSCHUSS-REICHL (Austria) said that, in view of the wide range of issues to be addressed by the Conference, it would be important to build on areas where consensus already existed. The annotated outline should reflect the kind of integral approach to population issues that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had taken to environmental issues. The Conference should seek to place population issues at the centre of sustainable development, for which States had shared but unequal responsibility. As it was clear that the world could not sustain a Western level of consumption, efforts should be made to change consumption patterns and to ensure equitable allocation of the world's resources. Chapter III of the outline should therefore stress changes in the Western lifestyle, use of cleaner technologies and greater energy efficiency and resource conservation.

29. Freedom of choice regarding reproductive rights, reproductive health and family planning was vital. Numerous countries which had made an effort to provide such freedom deserved the support of the international community. The assertion that the cornerstone of reproductive rights was the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children (para. 46) would be devoid of meaning if options, information and family-planning services were not made available or if such freedom was suppressed on religious or cultural grounds. The rights of some 300 million women who wished to use family-planning services must be acknowledged. Her delegation hoped that strong recommendations would be made in that regard. The Conference should also stress human resources development through the enhancement of primary health care.

30. Referring to chapter XI on population information, education and communication, she noted that the population and development "message" could be very effectively transmitted through the mass media. In that connection, the Vienna Institute for Development Cooperation, an NGO in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, would organize a round table on "Population and Communication" for the media, Governments and representatives of international organizations and NGOs.

31. The final document of the Conference should be operational, action-oriented and realistic, and should contain a clearly defined set of goals to be achieved over a 20-year time-frame, particularly in the areas of infant mortality; maternal mortality; life expectancy; contraceptive use; and education, especially for women and girls. Those objectives should be included in the annotated outline.

(Mrs. Freudenschuss-Reichl, Austria)

32. The Conference should address the problems of all regions. Greater attention should be devoted to the social and resource-management problems and demographic situation of countries with transition economies.

33. Her delegation agreed that proposals for concrete activities should be included in every chapter and section under the heading "selected topics for recommendations". Too often, mere recommendations had failed to influence the lives of men, women and children, detracting from the Organization's credibility.

34. As for financing, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had demonstrated that, with the exception of a limited number of activities, allocations often had to be generic. In the case of the forthcoming Conference, the areas of family planning and population data might be designated for specific cost estimates. Follow-up to the Conference should reflect the vital contribution of the NGO community. Her delegation hoped that informal consultations on the institutional arrangements for the follow-up would begin at the earliest possible date.

35. Mr. AVALLE (Argentina), stating that his statement would complement those delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the annotated outline largely reflected the observations made during the preparatory process, but that the different parts of the document were not well linked. Part Three in particular did not seem to fit into the rest of the document. Perhaps a transition could be made by identifying a list of voluntary activities in each of the chapters in Part Two and qualitative means of implementing them. Part Three might contain a general statement on ways and means of facilitating national and international implementation of the concepts adopted elsewhere in the document. It should stress, in particular, financing, the participation of NGOs and the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference.

36. Referring to the recommendations of the Conference, his delegation believed that it would be much more useful to propose a menu of activities from which countries could select, depending on their particular cultural, historical, social and religious situations. In conclusion, considering that the Conference was supposed to deal with the links between population and sustainable development, chapters III, IX and X did not sufficiently take into account the international economic situation and its impact on countries' demographic trends.

37. Mr. BOUCHER (World Bank) said that population dynamics had now shifted: fertility rates were declining in many countries, but population increase was creating unprecedented pressures on the social infrastructure. Together with international migration and the AIDS epidemic, such factors were forcing Governments and supporting institutions to adopt a broader strategic response. Many donors were re-examining their roles and an increasing number of clients of the World Bank were seeking to work with the Bank on population issues and to borrow for population components as well. At the same time, the Bank had been increasing its capacity to work with United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). There had been a shift from a few large projects devoted mainly to construction of facilities to a larger number of more

(Mr. Boucher)

targeted projects dealing with contraception, training, social marketing and management information. The President of the World Bank would address the International Conference on Population and Development on the Bank's role in implementing the Cairo agenda and the Bank would also present a paper on its view of the population problem and the role of the Bank in addressing it.

38. Regarding the synergies between family planning and broader social development efforts, a demand for smaller families could be promoted by measures to improve health and reduce infant mortality, measures to improve access to education, particularly for girls, and measures aimed at reducing poverty and raising income levels. The total commitment of the World Bank on population, health and nutrition amounted to $1.8 billion in 1993. The Bank's investments in maternal health and safe motherhood were 10 times what they had been in 1986. Its investments in education were increasingly aimed at keeping girls in school. The share of the Bank's portfolio devoted to the social sectors had grown from 6 to 14 per cent in the past five years. There was a need for a more specialized technical capacity and a more focused effort at the operational level. Its recent reorganization had further strengthened the Bank's capacity for population work at headquarters and in its regional operational units. A vice-presidency had been established for human resources development and operations policy. The human resource sectors would acquire additional staff in 1994 and the Bank was working to train existing operational staff for population work.

39. Mr. OSVALD (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said the task of the International Conference on Population and Development was to tackle imbalances between population growth and available resources. Population growth must be slowed in order to enable countries to achieve sustainable development. The more affluent societies had the responsibility of improving their management of their own and global natural resources.

40. Population size and rate of growth should be considered in the context of the society of which they were a product. Population policies must include many different sectors of society and there was seldom only one response to population pressures. The annotated outline of the final document of the International Conference should make those links more apparent. The effectiveness of population measures was determined to a large extent by the scope and content of social priorities, gender policies, health and education policies and overall economic policies. The Nordic countries were in favour of a multifaceted approach based on the individual, human dignity and rights.

41. The empowerment of women was a prerequisite for social development. The improved economic and social status of women had a positive effect on unsustainable fertility rates. Measures to improve women's rights must therefore be at the core of any serious action in the field of population and development. Two key areas were the education of women and the improvement of their economic and legal rights. At the same time, the annotated outline should place greater emphasis on the need to change the attitudes and responsibilities of men.

42. The issue of adolescence and young people should be placed squarely on the agenda of the Conference. In many societies, teenage sexuality was an issue

(Mr. Osvald, Sweden)

that the public and decision-makers tended to avoid. Inequalities between the sexes were very often the outcome of behaviour that young men and women had learned to accept as normal. Sex education and adequate contraceptive services for young people were therefore a cornerstone of any set of measures aimed at achieving gender equality and health goals.

43. Reproductive rights and reproductive health, including family planning, were crucial. Individuals must have access to varied and quality services in that area, regardless of where they lived. That was their right and an absolutely fundamental requirement.

44. National Governments must formulate and implement policies that ensured a sound balance between population growth and resources. External assistance, which could play an important role in initiating or helping to set up a programme, should be seen as a complement to national efforts. In the area of assistance to population-related issues, the Nordic countries were in the forefront and intended to raise their level of commitment as a group. The Nordic countries strongly advocated the concept of partnership in development, which should be reflected in the documents for the International Conference.

45. The Conference should adopt realistic and operational resolutions. In that respect, the final document should be made much stronger. Member States must ensure that there would be concordance between the goals adopted in Cairo and the ones that would emerge from the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

46. In May, the Preparatory Committee for the Conference had discussed the issue of global quantitative goals. Planning of that type should be carried out with extreme caution. Such goals must make sense at the national level. Moreover, goals that in some circumstances could be abused in order to legitimize various kinds of coercion must be avoided. National goals should be linked to the availability of services of various kinds, for instance in the fields of education, child care or reproductive health.

47. Mr. CUI Tiankai (China) said that, as a populous developing country, China attached great importance to the International Conference on Population and Development. The final document adopted at that Conference should reflect the international community's heightened awareness of the relationship between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development and should provide guidelines for international cooperation in the field of population in the coming decade.

48. The question of population was a question of development. Excessive population growth and overconsumption, which outpaced productivity and overburdened the environment, hindered economic and social development, aggravated poverty and underdevelopment and caused environmental degradation. Part One of the final document, which contained the preamble and principles, should deal with the interrelated issues of overpopulation, poverty, economic development and environmental protection in a comprehensive and integrated manner.

(Mr. Cui Tiankai, China)

49. Different countries were faced with different circumstances. It was therefore only logical for countries to formulate their own population policies and objectives as well as programmes, priorities and measures designed to achieve those objectives in the light of their economic and social development. That was the sovereign right of countries, which should be respected without any outside interference.

50. Survival and development were the most fundamental and pressing challenges faced by most developing countries. The right to development should therefore be included in the final document as an important principle since it was in keeping with the actual needs of most of the world's population.

51. In order to make the final document more comprehensive and responsive to the needs of developing countries, such areas as the elimination of hunger and malnutrition, food security, alleviation of natural disasters, improvement of human settlements and human resources development should be added to the programme. Some areas, such as the elimination of poverty and the improvement of the status of women, should be further strengthened. In its current form, the annotated outline did not expressly provide for the means of implementation nor did it spell out practical follow-up activities. That shortcoming should be redressed in the course of the preparations for the Conference.

52. In order to achieve the objectives of the Conference, the international community should make concerted efforts to promote cooperation in the fields of population and development. The developing countries should take measures to build up their own capacity and set priorities, and the developed countries and international organizations should endeavour to improve the international economic environment and provide the developing countries with the necessary international assistance in order to help them reduce population growth, promote economic development and eliminate poverty. On the basis of the consensus to be reached at the International Conference, the competent international organizations in the field of population and development, particularly those of the United Nations system, should strengthen their coordination, improve efficiency, make full use of their respective expertise and adopt practical and effective measures. The mandates of those organizations and the division of labour among them should be clearly defined and their resources should be provided on an adequate, assured and predictable basis.

53. Mr. MARRERO (United States of America) said that his delegation fully supported the aims and objectives of the International Conference on Population and Development. The preparations for the Conference had already increased global awareness of population issues and had provided opportunities for new groups to learn about population. They had also helped to break down institutional and sectoral boundaries and promote the rapid diffusion of knowledge and ideas. The expert meetings, regional conferences and other meetings at the national and international levels had contributed to that process. As a result, participation in the Conference was likely to be far broader than at any previous population conference.

54. The recommendations that emerged from the International Conference should constitute a clear agenda for future action and recommendations should therefore be clear, concise and action-oriented and reflect the urgency of the problems

(Mr. Marrero, United States)

being addressed. The Secretariat should keep the number of recommendations to a minimum.

55. His delegation hoped that the final document would state clearly that stabilizing the world's population was a goal that underlay and mutually reinforced all of the other goals that had already been identified. The international community must develop the means to measure its success in attaining important goals, such as improvement in the quality of care.

56. Issues of gender discrimination and inequality must be dealt with in order to achieve a number of population-related goals. Recommendations relating to families and compatibility between work and parental roles must also recognize explicitly that compatibility depended not only on adequate child care and other social policies and programmes, but also on access to the means to control the number and spacing of children. Women's control over child-bearing was fundamental to achieving full gender equality.

57. The language of chapter VII should be broadened to encompass more than access to currently available methods of contraception. Family-planning programmes should be viewed as part of broader reproductive health programmes that also addressed closely related programme needs, such as AIDS prevention, the contraceptive needs of adolescents and other unmarried people, and safe abortion and other pregnancy-related services. Family-planning programmes should be voluntary and respect individual reproductive rights.

58. The content and organization of Part Three might require further attention. While his delegation agreed in principle with the suggestion that chapter XI should be integrated into other chapters as appropriate, the recommendations should contain strong language urging Governments to strengthen information, education and communication programmes related to family planning and reproductive health.

59. In the area of capacity-building, the recommendations should also recognize some reciprocal obligations. Financial and technical support to increase national capacities must be accompanied by a commitment on the part of both donors and recipients to be accountable for how that support was used.

60. His delegation endorsed the strong chapter XIII, which dealt with technology, research and development, and recommended a broadening of the categories of research to include reproductive health and measures to address epidemiological, behavioural, programmatic and biomedical research needs.

61. In the area of implementation, estimates of resource requirements would play a vital role in discussions at the Conference. As far as possible, the recommendations put forward at the Conference should be supported by such estimates. In addition, in order to enable Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to implement the final recommendations, it was essential to develop mechanisms that ensured accountability.

62. Mr. McKINNON (New Zealand), speaking on behalf of Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, the Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, said that in mid-1993, the population of Pacific island developing countries had been estimated at approximately 6.3 million and population growth projections for the region were well above world averages. The problems associated with high population growth and urban migration were amplified due to the smallness and limited land areas of Pacific island developing countries. The consequences of the complex relationship between population, development, social and cultural factors and the environment were evident: urban drift, scarcity of land, environmental degradation, unemployment, deterioration in law and order, lack of educational opportunities, inadequate health facilities and services, teenage pregnancy, diseases caused by changes in dietary patterns and lifestyles, the erosion of traditional cultures and kinship systems and the increasing incidence of sexually transmitted diseases. In particular, the Pacific region needed to broaden its activities in the field of information, education and communication in order to protect its very young population from the scourge of drugs.

63. Solutions to population and development issues must depend on, and be found within, the context of the specific social, cultural and economic priorities and needs of each country and territory. In order to ensure the effective management of the complex relationship between population, development and the environment in the Pacific, particular attention should be focused on land availability, food security, employment opportunities, access to natural resources, and reproductive rights and responsibilities. It was also necessary to take into account the many strengths that Pacific cultures brought to the challenges of population and sustainable development. In that regard, the Port Vila Declaration (A/C.2/48/3, annex) stressed that population issues could not be separated from the issue of improving the social, economic, political and legal status of Pacific women.

64. The States members of the South Pacific Forum were pleased to note that the final document of the Conference would address the specific perspective of indigenous people on the interrelations between population, environment and development. They also welcomed the important contribution of the many non-governmental organizations that were active in the field of population and development in the countries and territories of the Pacific region. They supported the initiative taken by Pacific non-governmental organizations to convene a meeting on population and development in Fiji in February 1994. That meeting would be an important part of the Pacific region's contribution to the International Conference.

65. Mr. HORIGUCHI (Japan) said that the final document of the International Conference on Population and Development must be as clear, concise and action-oriented as possible. In that context, it was appropriate that the proposed annotated outline indicated the basis for action, objectives and selected topics for recommendations under each section. Parts Two and Three should be combined. A new Part Two might provide a summary of what was to be included in the final document and explain how that document differed from the World Population Plan of Action. The new combined Part Three could be shortened by further clustering topics. One possibility would be to cluster chapters IV, V, VII and VIII into a new chapter entitled "Health and the role of women", chapters IX and X into a chapter entitled "Migration", and chapters XIV, XV and XVI into a new chapter

(Mr. Horiguchi, Japan)

that would be entitled "National action and international cooperation". At the same time, every effort should be made to make each chapter as short as possible.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.